



# News Release

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## **Heart disease is a top killer in Washington, so take steps to be heart healthy**

**OLYMPIA** — One in five women and one in four men are killed by heart disease in Washington yet there are ways to [protect your heart and the hearts of those you love](#).

Department of Health officials want you to know that one great step to being heart healthy is having your blood pressure checked and [knowing what your blood pressure numbers mean](#). For most people, a healthy range is less than 120/80. Get checked by a health care provider and write your numbers down so you know what they are.

High blood pressure is manageable, and your choices can make a big difference. Small decreases in blood pressure can really help because every five point decrease in blood pressure reduces your risk of heart attack by 21 percent. Some people with high blood pressure need both lifestyle changes and medications to reach their target.

[Being active](#) and [eating a heart-healthy diet](#) are other ways to improve heart health. Be active at least 30 minutes a day, five days per week, and include strength training activities twice a week; and eat a diet high in fruits and vegetables, and low in sugar, salt, and fat.

[Stopping smoking](#) and managing diabetes can also help your heart. For smokers over age 35, heart disease claims more lives than lung cancer, and diabetes also puts people at risk for heart disease. Learn how to prevent and manage diabetes and see if you qualify for the [Diabetes Prevention Program](#).

[Healthy Communities Washington](#) works to make the places you live, learn, work, and play more heart healthy. Contact your local public health agency about activities in your community.

The [Department of Health website](#) ([doh.wa.gov](http://doh.wa.gov)) is your source for *a healthy dose of information*. Also, [find us on Facebook](#) and [follow us on Twitter](#).

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